

**IN THE CLAIMS**

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:
  - a plasma chamber ~~containing~~ to contain a plasma for a plasma-assisted material process upon a substrate;
  - a solid shielding plate within said plasma chamber disposed between the substrate and a gas inlet of the plasma chamber to actively direct ion flux to desired areas of the substrate; and
  - a supporting structure, comprised of three supports and placed within the plasma chamber, to support said ~~suspend the~~ shielding plate in a stationary position ~~within said chamber, the support structure comprised of three supports, each of the three supports contacting the solid shielding plate in a corresponding location.~~
2. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the plasma-assisted material process is a plasma-assisted etching process.
3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the plasma-assisted material process is a plasma-enhanced chemical vapor deposition process.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the solid shielding plate and the supporting structure are composed of a dielectric material.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)

7. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the solid shielding plate is shaped to concentrate etching within a desired area of the substrate.
8. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the dimensions of the solid shielding plate are dependent upon the dimensions of the plasma chamber and the substrate.
9. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the thickness of the solid shielding plate is 2-5 mm.
10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the distance between a member of said supporting structure and said substrate is greater than the mean free path of a reactive particle.
11. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the width of a member of said supporting structure is less than the mean free path of a reactive particle.
12. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein all edges of said solid shielding plate are rounded.
13. (Previously presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the solid shielding plate is circular.
14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the plasma-assisted material process is carried out in high-density plasma.
- 15 -29 (Cancelled)

30. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a plasma chamber; ~~containing to contain~~ a plasma for a plasma-assisted material process upon a substrate;

a gas inlet to introduce reactive gas into the plasma chamber;

a pedestal on which to set a substrate while conducting a plasma-assisted material process upon the substrate; and

a stationary shield placed in the plasma chamber and disposed between the gas inlet and the pedestal, the shield directing an ion flux within the plasma chamber to alter the plasma-assisted material process, the ~~stationery~~ stationary shield supported by a support structure, ~~the support structure comprised~~ structure comprised of three supports, ~~each of the three supports contacting in~~ contact with the solid shielding plate in a corresponding location.

31. (Currently Amended) An apparatus comprising:

a plasma chamber;

a pedestal within the plasma chamber upon which a reticle is positioned;

~~a reticle positioned upon the pedestal~~; and

a circular shielding plate within ~~said the~~ plasma chamber positioned between the reticle and a gas inlet of the plasma chamber, the circular shielding plate to actively direct ion flux to desired areas of the reticle, the circular shielding plate suspended from above the reticle such that the position of the circular shielding plate is maintained independent of the pedestal.